

Without a doubt, American taxpayers deserve a substantial tax cut. But they also deserve a strengthened Social Security system, a Medicare program that covers prescription drugs, a military that is equipped to protect our nation, a quality health care system that is affordable and accessible to every family, and a world-class educational system that prepares our children for the 21st century. These needs are great and they must not be ignored. They will require additional spending by the federal government, but this tax cut leaves room for no such investment. I urge my colleagues to reject this ill-advised tax cut, which will jeopardize our future fiscal security, while doing nothing to address immediate economic needs.

RECOGNIZING THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FIRST DIAGNOSED CASE OF ACQUIRED IMMUNE DEFICIENCY SYNDROME (AIDS)

HON. DIANA DeGETTE

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 5, 2001

Ms. DEGETTE. Mr. Speaker, today I recognize the 20th anniversary of the first diagnosed case of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) in the United States. The past twenty years have heralded many medical advances, especially in drug treatment therapies for AIDS patients. However, despite an increased understanding of the disease and an improved quality of care for patients, more than 438,000 people have died from the disease since the early 1980s in the United States alone.

Efforts towards prevention and education have helped decrease the magnitude of the epidemic, however there are currently more than 750,000 people living with AIDS in the U.S. Among new infections, the fastest growing segment is women and children. In fact, national statistics indicate that AIDS is the seventh leading cause of death among youths between the ages of fifteen and twenty-four. Surveys also indicate that approximately 87 percent of young Americans do not believe that they are at risk for contracting HIV. A growing number of cases of infection in youths clearly demonstrates a need for a greater emphasis on education, and prevention. While the AIDS scare of the late 1980s and the early 1990s appears to be over, the persistence of this insidious disease is not. Complacency about this disease and its reach must not be allowed to grow.

Among the federal government's programs and legislation addressing the issue of AIDS, one of the most effective is the Ryan White Care Act, which was signed into law in 1990 and reauthorized in 2000. The ultimate goal of this act is to improve health care and make it more accessible to patients and their families. In order to achieve this, the Ryan White Care Act provides funding to states as well as non-profit organizations that develop and organize the distribution of necessary health care and services to patients and their families.

This act has been helpful to residents with HIV/AIDS in my home state of Colorado, where there were 6,761 reported cases of AIDS in 1999. During the 2000 Fiscal Year, the state of Colorado qualified for over \$4 mil-

lion under Title I of the Ryan White Care Act, which provided funding to improve health care in metropolitan areas disproportionately affected by the HIV epidemic. Title IV appropriated over \$600 K in additional dollars to fund programs focusing on women, infants, children, and youth in Colorado.

This funding has been put to good use in Colorado, as it has not only helped children receive better care, but has also improved their access to necessary treatment. Considering that children are one of the fastest growing groups affected by AIDS, we must do all we can to stem the tide of its growth. We must continue to support measures that insure all patients receive adequate care, and continue our efforts to protect and educate our youth, since they are the future.

INTRODUCTION OF THE MEDICARE WELLNESS ACT OF 2001

HON. MARK FOLEY

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 5, 2001

Mr. FOLEY. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to join today with my colleague Sander Levin to again introduce the Medicare Wellness Act. This legislation makes common sense reforms to the Medicare program to help ensure that our seniors are living longer, healthier lives.

The focus of the Medicare program since its inception in 1965 has been on sickness—once people are ill, the Medicare program steps in to treat that illness. But medical technology and treatment options have come a long way since 1965. Sadly, the Medicare program has not kept pace with those advances.

The new focus of Medicare should be on wellness. We can, and should, prevent seniors from getting sick, and promote good health. This focus not only has health benefits, but is also fiscally responsible. Hospitalization is one of the most expensive benefits provided under the Medicare program, and often, hospitalization is the only option. However, if the Medicare program can be reformed to help prevent instances of hospitalization we will not only have healthier seniors, but we will utilize Medicare's resources in the most effective way.

The Medicare Wellness Act of 2001 not only increases screening and preventive services, based on the recommendations of the National Preventive Services Task Force, but includes mechanisms that will help promote healthy lifestyles, disease prevention, and encourage a change in personal health habits.

Congress began adding these needed benefits in 1997's Balanced Budget Act by adding four initial preventive benefits. We have since added to those benefits, and improved many of them. As we discuss adding other new benefits, such as a prescription drug plan, to Medicare, we cannot do so without facing the fundamental need for reform of the program. Incorporating these common sense benefits is a necessary component of any true reform package.

I would urge my colleagues to support this measure, and look forward to its inclusion in any Medicare reform legislation considered by the Congress this year.

HONORING MURRAY EILBERG

HON. PETER DEUTSCH

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 5, 2001

Mr. DEUTSCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a man who will be greatly missed by all who knew him. A man who served his country proudly in its hour of need, and a man whose love for his work and his life are only eclipsed by his immeasurable love of family. It brings me great sadness to report that Murray Eilberg of Fort Lauderdale, Florida, passed away last night at the age of 77.

Murray Eilberg was raised in Brooklyn, New York. He grew up right around the corner from a wonderful girl named Jane, who would become the love of his life. Murray and Jane were married for over 57 years. Their family grew as they had three loving children, Patricia, Herman, and Joey. Devoted to his family above all else, Murray was blessed to have six grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

Like so many of the Greatest Generation, Murray Eilberg fought for his country when our nation called him to serve in World War II. Murray was proud to serve in the US Army Corps of Engineers as a brave member of the Experimental Demolitions Unit.

Growing up, Murray dreamed of becoming a motorman. And so after the War, Murray spent twenty-two years working for the New York City transit system as one of the city's finest motormen. Only a progressively worsening eye condition could stop Murray from doing what he loved, as no one had any doubt he would have worked another twenty-two years if given the chance.

In 1969, Murray retired and, with Jane, became beloved members of the South Florida community. Despite his blindness, he remained active as a member of the Blinded Veteran's Association, the Disabled American Veterans, and the American Legion. Known for his unwavering sense of humor, Murray was an avid joke teller who would captivate an audience; even during his final days in the hospital.

Mr. Speaker, Murray Eilberg was both well-loved and widely respected by all those blessed to have known him. He selflessly served his country. His life's work was his dream. And his family was a source of admiration and great pride. Today we celebrate Murray's life which serves as a wonderful example to all who follow in his footsteps.

HONORING THE U.S. MILITARY ACADEMY AT WEST POINT, NEW YORK CLASS OF 2001

HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 5, 2001

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, Permit me to take this opportunity to congratulate the nine-hundred cadets of the graduating class of 2001 from our United States Military Academy at West Point, New York.

I was gratified to once again be able to join this year's graduating class, along with our Deputy Secretary of Defense, Paul Wolfowitz,